

Appl. No. 10/825,166
Reply to Office Action of December 5, 2005

REMARKS

I. Summary of Examiner's Office Action

The Examiner objected to the specification as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the subject matter of Claim 10. The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 3, 4 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Erlich et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,428,240. The Examiner also rejected Claims 1 and 3-5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heine et al. U.S. Patent No. 3,696,623. The Examiner advised that Claims 7-9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, and Claims 10-11 would be allowable over the prior art of record.

II. Applicant's Reply to the Examiner's Objection
for Failure to Provide Proper Antecedent Basis

The Examiner objected to the specification as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. Specifically, the Examiner asserted that there was no antecedent basis in the specification for the term "flexible" in relation to the plurality of transverse, hollow plastic tubes of Claim 10. By the above amendments to the claims, Applicant has deleted the term "flexible" from Claim 10. The Examiner advised during a telephone interview on January 24,

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2006 that Claim 10 would be allowed if the term "flexible" was deleted.

III. Applicant's Reply to the Examiner's §103(a) Rejections

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 3, 4 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Erlich et al., and rejected Claims 1 and 3-5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heine et al. By the above amendments to the claims, Applicant has canceled Claims 1 and 3-6.

IV. Additional Remarks

The Examiner advised that Claims 7-9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By the above amendments to the claims, Applicant has rewritten Claim 7 in independent form to include all limitations of Claim 1, upon which Claim 7 previously was based. Claims 8 and 9 depend from Claim 7.

The Examiner advised during a telephone interview on January 24, 2006 that Claim 7 would continue to be allowable if Applicant were to delete the word "midway" therefrom when describing the location of the gas release ports with respect to the hold down means. By the above amendments to the

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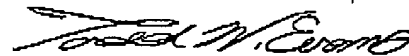
claims, Applicant has so deleted the word "midway" from Claim
7.

V. Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 7-11 which
remain in the application are in condition for allowance and,
therefore, that this application is in condition for
allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of the application
are respectfully requested.

Dated: February 2, 2006

Respectfully submitted,



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